



TalkforWriting

Year 5

Talk for Writing Home-school booklet

# Meet the Rhi-swano-zeb-tah

by Maria Richards



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# Meet the Rhi-swano-zeb-tah

Year 5 Workbook  
By Maria Richards



## Welcome to the Rhi-swano-zeb-tah workbook.



Inside you'll find lots of things to work through that will help you with your reading and writing skills and build on the work you do at school.

I'm your explorer and guide, so let's get on with our exciting adventure together!

### *Stimulus - Where the Wild Things Are*

In 1963, Maurice Sendak wrote the picture book **Where the Wild Things Are**. Do you know it? In the story, Max, on the night he wore his wolf suit, went on a magical journey to the land of the Wild Things and became the king of these strange creatures. Eventually, he missed home and made the journey back to his bedroom, where it all began. It's a wonderful story – you can listen to it here and see the wonderful illustrations.

Follow this link to watch the video: <https://cutt.ly/6yrU67Z>

In the story, there are many strange creatures that have never been seen before. As an explorer, I discover strange creatures all the time on my travels around the world. I have become expert at looking very carefully for animals as some are very good at hiding.



## Get Exploring!



Here's a new creature I managed to photograph on my travels to Africa last year. It is the extremely rare Rhiswanozebtah. It is believed to contain DNA from four different animals: rhinos, swans, zebras and cheetahs – which gives it its name.

Now you know it's a mix of  
**rhino** plus  
**swan** plus the  
**o** of rhino plus the start of  
**zebra** and the end of  
**cheetah**,  
you will be able to pronounce it easily!



Credit: created using graphics from Switchzoo.com

I have written a paper about it, using my research, to help you find out more about this wonderful animal. Read on and discover the world of the Rhiswanozebtah!

*You can listen to an audio version of the text here*  
<https://soundcloud.com/talkforwriting/rhi-swano-zeb-tah/s-VRW2gbiXcMY>





# The Rhiswanozebtah

## An information text by Ted Splorer

The Rhiswanozebtah is an extremely rare, flying creature from the subfamily Rhinofelinae.

Rhiswanozebtahs, although uncommon, are easy to identify, as they are a mixture of four distinct animals. They have the head of a rhino, the body of a swan and zebra and the tail of a cheetah. They have a wingspan of 2.8 metres and can grow to over 5 metres in length, which means they are the largest flying creatures since Pterodactyl dinosaurs. Additionally, their skin tends to be covered in feathers but as they get older, the zebra stripes become more prominent. Their tails are covered in fur and their heads are covered in leathery, grey skin. However, juveniles are born completely bald and develop their fur, feathers and colourings when they mature.

Most Rhiswanozebtahs are found across South Africa, although some have been known to inhabit the deepest rainforests of Venezuela. Amazingly, Rhiswanozebtahs like to burrow and therefore make their homes underground. They use their Rhino tusk to gouge the sun-baked soil and tunnel deep down, to create soil cocoons to sleep in. Some have been known to sleep in trees, but only the largest Kapok branches can support their enormous weight.

All Rhiswanozebtahs are carnivores and only eat meat. Interestingly, their favourite prey is the Springbok antelope, which they descend on from great heights and then wrestle to the ground. They have also been known to devour many smaller mammals such as African Wild Cats and aardvarks. Furthermore, many will guzzle gallons of water a day and sadly, these creatures can cause huge water shortages during the dry season.

As well as being the largest flying animal in the world, the Rhiswanozebtah is also the most talented. The majority can use their vocal cords to create the most beautiful morning chorus as the sun rises. This is with the exception of the young males. Their voices do not develop until they are 15 years old and some explorers have reported that their calls are high-pitched, squeaky and very unpleasant to listen to. In addition to this, and despite their size, all Rhiswanozebtahs are tremendously agile. They can stand on one leg for long stretches of time, roll and flip whilst running or flying and can balance on narrow branches and cliff edges when surveying for prey.

For many years, scientists have been secretly tracking the Rhiswanozebtahs in the wild and now know that there are only approximately 625 roaming the savannahs and nesting in rainforests. Amazingly, however, there have been rare sightings in other parts of the world, so just maybe, the Rhiswanozebtah will be spotted in a neighbourhood near you in the not-so-distant future.

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## Interests, Questions and Favourites

Now you have found out more about the Rhiswanozebtah, what are your thoughts about this animal?

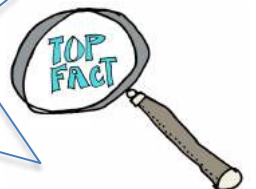
I was really interested in ...



I would like to know more about ...



My top facts were ...



## Let's Explore the Words!



Go back through the text and underline any words you don't know the meaning of. Can you find out? Ask an adult, use a dictionary or try using Google.

If you've managed to discover the meaning of any of the words you underlined, list them here. Come back to them at the end of this workbook and see if you still remember them.

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We're going to investigate some of the words from the text together.

Word:	Definition:
juveniles	Anything young e.g. animals, humans, plants
prominent	Something that stands out and can be seen easily
inhabit	To live somewhere
gouge	To make a rough hole in something
agile	Moving quickly and easily
surveying	Looking out for something
prey	An animal that is hunted by another animal



## Example/Non-example



★ Using the definitions above, look at the pictures and tick the one that shows an example of the word.

juvenile

☐☐

agile

☐☐

gouge

☐☐



## Fill the gaps

★ Fill in the gap below with the correct word from our list to finish the sentence.

- ★ The scales on a giant lion snake act as a warning to hunters and are very \_\_\_\_\_.
- Cheetahs stalk a range of \_\_\_\_\_ when they hunt.
- Many Polar bears \_\_\_\_\_ the North Pole, along with seals.
- Beavers tend to \_\_\_\_\_ holes into logs to keep their teeth sharp.



## Review Learning

★ What can you remember? Underline the correct definition of the words below.

Does **inhabit** mean 'to live somewhere' or 'to walk through something'?

Does **prominent** mean to 'be seen' or to 'stand out clearly'?

Does **surveying** mean 'to look around for something' or 'to glide along quietly'?

Does being **juvenile** mean 'being a human' or 'being young'?

## Let's think about the text a little more



We're going to answer some comprehension questions about The Rhiswanozebtah.

1. What are the four distinct animals that make up the Rhiswanozebtah?

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2. The Rhiswanozebtah likes to sleep in patches of grass. Is that statement TRUE or FALSE?  
Circle the answer.



3. What evidence is there to suggest that the Rhiswanozebtah is agile?

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4. Find and copy a word that is closest in meaning to *unlikable*.

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5. The text refers to areas the Rhiswanozebtah inhabits. What are they?

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6. Look at the table below. Tick the food that the Rhiswanozebtah would eat.

	Would eat	Wouldn't eat
Rabbits		
Cauliflower		
Leaves		
Snakes		
Water buffalo		

7. Why might the Rhiswanozebtah be so rare?

8. Which section of the text tells you about what the Rhiswanozebtah can do? Write the opening sentences of that section below:

9. Give two ways in which the Rhiswanozebtah could be a nuisance.

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10. At the end of the text it states:

*Amazingly however, there have been rare sightings in other parts of the world, so just maybe, the Rhiswanozebtah will be spotted in a neighbourhood near you in the not-so-distant future.*

What might happen if a Rhiswanozebtah did make its home near to where you live? List the things that you might witness as a result of this new creature moving in. Consider all the facts about how it behaves.

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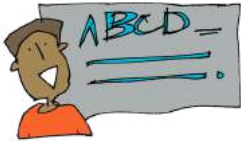
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## Now for some grammar

### What are brackets good for?

Brackets (which always come in pairs) are used to separate off **additional** information that would interrupt the flow of a sentence or cause confusion if commas were used instead. The information in the brackets is not essential to the meaning of the original sentence.

Here are some examples:

1. The Rhiswanozebtah (a very strange creature) likes to live in rainforests.
2. The explorers (who have recently returned from Mongolia) are setting off on a new safari tomorrow.



★ Complete the sentences below by adding in some additional information about Rhiswanozebtahs.

*The skin of a Rhiswanozebtah is covered in feathers*

*(which are \_\_\_\_\_) and fur.*

*Rhiswanozebtahs live in different places (like*

*\_\_\_\_\_ ) and tend to live alone.*

*Many young Rhiswanozebtahs (aged \_\_\_\_\_) can travel*

*vast distances.*



Now try some of your own.

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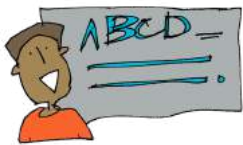
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### Let's do some Sentence Imitation



★ Try using some sentence patterns from the Rhiswanozebtah report and create new sentences using the same structure.

**1. Adverb starters to engage the reader.** These can be used when you want to give your reader a really juicy fact:

Amazingly, Rhiswanozebtahs like to burrow and, therefore, make their homes underground.

You can also use these to start your sentence:

- ★ Interestingly,
- ★ Surprisingly,
- ★ Weirdly,
- ★ Intriguingly,
- ★ Unusually,
- ★ Astoundingly

- ★ Invent some more really juicy facts about the Rhiswanozebtah and start them with an adverb to engage. Be as creative as you like with your inventions. For example:

Weirdly, Rhiswanozebtahs will sleep with one eye open.



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## 2. Additionally plus a fact.

You can add on facts by using sentence signposts that signal addition: for example, **additionally, in addition to, also, furthermore and moreover.**

Rhiswanozebtahs are large. **Additionally**, their skin tends to be covered in feathers but, as they get older, the zebra stripes become more prominent.



Add to these sentences by inventing some new facts about the Rhiswanozebtah.

Rhiswanozebtahs like to eat fish. *Additionally*, ...

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Some Rhiswanozebtahs sleep underground. *Furthermore*,

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Most Rhiswanozebtahs can run at a speed of 30 miles per hour. *In addition to this*, ...

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★ Now try some of your own. Invent a statement about the Rhiswanozebtah and then add on to it using any of the add-on sentence signposts above.

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## Write Away!

Now let's explore your writing! Before we start, let's do some warming up, so we're ready to write really good information.

### The Sentence Starter Game

- ★ First, pick a subject from the boxes below. Colour in the box (to show what you've chosen).

Unicorns	Giants	Mermaids	Vampires	Dragons
Fairies	Robots	Teachers	Ghosts	Trolls

All the sentence starters below use language that you would often find in an information text.

- ★ Now complete the sentences, using invented facts about your new subject.

*The first thing to say about ...*

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*In addition to ...*

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*The most extraordinary thing about ...*

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*It is a little known fact that ...*

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*Normally,*

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*You may not know but ...*

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*Surprisingly, ...*

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## Your Turn!



Now it's your turn to be an author and write an information text. Let's take a look at the 'Appearance' section of the Rhiswanozebtah text. This shows us what it looks like.

**Rhiswanozebtahs**, although uncommon, are easy to identify, as they are a mixture of four distinct animals. They have the head of a rhino, the body of a swan and zebra and the tail of a cheetah. They have a wingspan of 2.8 metres and can grow to over 5 metres in length, which means they are the largest flying creatures since Pterodactyl dinosaurs. Additionally, their skin tends to be covered in feathers but as they get older, the zebra stripes become more prominent. Their tails are covered in fur and their heads are covered in leathery, grey skin. However, juveniles are born completely bold and develop their fur, feathers and colourings when they mature.

- ★ Rewrite this paragraph so that it provides information about this Blue-headed iguana:



Using the ideas & sentence patterns from the paragraph above, try out your new appearance ideas. You should be able to write in facts to replace the ones in blue below.

★ Follow this pattern: Start by introducing the creature and why it's easy to identify

Rhiswanozebtahs, although uncommon, are easy to identify, as they are a mixture of four distinct animals.

*Blue-Headed Iguanas ...*

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Next, describe what they look like in detail using the model paragraph below to help you. Try to add on some extra information using a clause like this: ... which means ... (These are known as relative clauses because they help you relate the information.)

They have the head of a rhino, the body of a swan and zebra and the tail of a cheetah. Furthermore, their wingspan reaches 2.8 metres and they can grow to over 5 metres in length, which means they are the largest flying creatures since Pterodactyl dinosaurs.

*They have ...*

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Now, add on some further information about how they look.

Additionally, their skin tends to be covered in feathers but as they get older, the zebra stripes become more prominent. Their tails are covered in fur and their heads are covered in leathery, grey skin.

*Additionally,*

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Finally, give some contrasting information using 'however.'

Mature Rhiswanozebtahs are famous for their thick fur. However, juveniles are born completely bald and develop their fur, feathers and colourings when they mature.

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What other rare, not yet discovered, creature could you write about?

★ First, let's create a new animal to explore. If you have access to the Internet, type this into Google:



<https://www.switchzoo.com>

Here, you can create your own creature by blending zoo animals together. Print off your animal and stick it below. OR you can create your creature yourself. Simply draw into the box below to design a new animal that you might find on land or in the sea.





## Get Planning!

★ Use the boxed-up planner to plan your facts. It has the same structure as my text. Make notes or draw pictures.

<i>Name of animal</i>	•
<i>What is it?</i> <i>Introduce the animal</i>	• •
<i>Appearance</i> <i>What does it look like?</i>	• •
<i>Habitat</i> <i>Where does it live?</i>	• •
<i>Diet</i> <i>What does it eat?</i>	• •
<i>Talents</i> <i>What can it do?</i>	• •
<i>Fascinating fact</i>	•



Are you ready to present your research and write your information text? Then write it, read it and check it! See you at the end!



**Well done! Now that you have written your information, why not publish it? Below are some simple instructions for making a mini- book from a piece of A4 paper.**



If you have access to the Internet, type this into Google:

<https://cutt.ly/QtvAkwq>

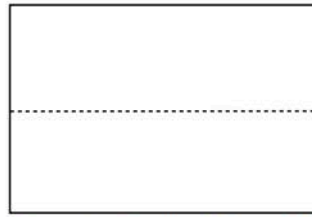
Here, you can watch a mini-book being made and follow the instructions.

Or try this:

## How to Make a Six-Page Book With One Sheet of Paper!



1. One sheet of white paper.  
12" X 18" is a good size to use.



2. Fold in half lengthwise. Also known as a "Hotdog Fold".



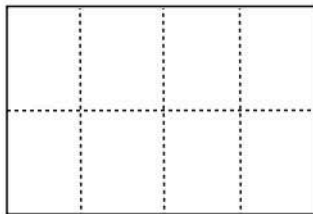
3. Fold in half again.



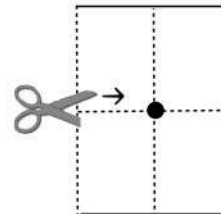
4. Fold in half again.



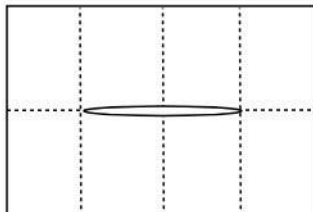
5. Now you have a very small folded sheet of paper. But it isn't a book yet.



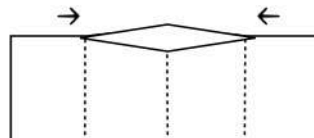
6. Unfold everything. Now it is a big sheet of paper with lots of fold lines.



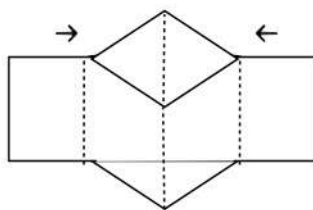
7. Fold in half in the middle- this time a "Hamburger Fold". Make a mark with your pencil in the center of the folded sheet. Take your scissors and cut from the *folded edge* to the center dot. Stop cutting at the dot!



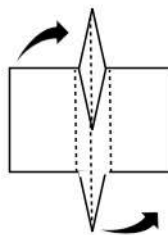
8. Unfold your sheet of paper. It should look like this with an open slit in the middle. Fold it in half length-wise again. (Hotdog Fold.)



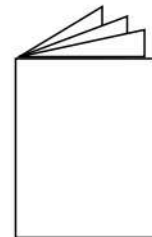
9. Push folded edges towards center allowing the slit to open up into a diamond shape.



10. Keep pushing edges together until diamond becomes a slit again, perpendicular to folded edges.



11. Fold one edge toward slit and the opposite slit toward folded edge.



12. Be sure to go over the creases to make them sharp. Now you have a small six-page book!

© 2012 Book-making Activity for *Tell Me About Your Day Today* created by Lauren Stringer,  
[www.laurenstringer.com](http://www.laurenstringer.com)

*Make your book and illustrate it - enjoy!*

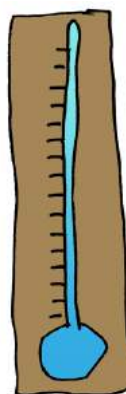
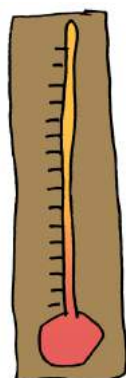


We've reached the end of our adventure  
and I hope you've had fun!

*I really enjoyed ...*



**I would rate my journey through this booklet (tick hot or cold):**





*This workbook has helped me learn ...*



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**Maria Richards, former teacher and National Strategy Literacy Consultant, now works with Talk for Writing to help schools develop the approach.**

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